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The
John Alden House

Built 1653

Duxbury, Massachusetts

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THE STORY

OF

THE JOHN ALDEN HOUSE

BUILT 1653

DUXBURY, MASSACHUSETTS

Charles L. Alden
Duxbury
Mass.
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FOREWORD

This booklet was prepared in answer to repeated requests from hundreds of visitors who desire more information concerning the John Alden House and the Duxbury Pilgrims than can possibly be supplied verbally during one short visit. Information is included which directly answers the questions most consistantly asked. Acknowledgement is made for information gleaned from History of Duxbury by Justin Winsor, for genealogical data from Memorial of the Descendants of the Hon. John Alden by Ebenezer Alden, M. D. and for that from various other sources, most of which are mentioned in the text.

JOHN ALDEN HOUSE—Built 1653
Duxbury, Massachusetts

THE JOHN ALDEN HOUSE

The Alden Homestead is situated in Duxbury, Massachusetts, on Alden street, one quarter mile from Route 3A. It crowns a knoll to the west of the one upon which Pilgrim John, in 1627, built a log cabin, his first home in Duxbury.

John Alden was probably born in Hove, England, in 1599 and came to America in the Mayflower in 1620, signing on as a cooper, as was then required by English law. Priscilla also came on the Mayflower with her father William Mullins, her mother, a younger brother Joseph and two servants. The family was of Huguenot extraction and apparently of considerable wealth. Of the six, only Priscilla and one servant survived the hardships of that first winter. Thereupon Priscilla was placed in the home of Gov. Bradford. She was married to John Alden in Plymouth in 1622 and they occupied a log house just under Burial Hill. Here their first three children were born. The site is marked by a boulder with a bronze tablet placed thereon by the Alden Kindred of America.

There had been a growing tendency for the Pilgrims to spread out from Plymouth because of the poor quality of the soil there and because the increase in the number of cattle made more pasturage necessary. For this purpose, the land in Duxbury was well adapted. Some of the foremost of the Pilgrims came northward; among their number being Bradford, Winslow, Standish, Alden, Delano and Soule. The locations they chose comprised the present town of Duxbury and parts of Marshfield, Pembroke, Hanson and Kingston.

It was called Duxbury from Duxborough Hall in England, the ancestral home of the Standish family. This exodus from Plymouth is thus described by Bradford in his History of the Plymouth Plantation:

"For now as their stocks increased, and ye increase vendible, ther was no longer any holding them togeather, but now they must of necessitie, goe to their great lots; they could not other wise keep their katle; and having oxen growne, they must have land for plowing and tillage. And no man now thought he could live, except he had catle and a great deal of ground to keep them; all striving to increase their stocks. By which means they were scatered all over ye bay, quickly and ye towne, in which they lived compactly til now, was left very thine, and in a short time all most desolate. And if this had been all, it had been less, thoug to much; but ye church must also be divided, and those yt had lived so long togeather in Christian and comfortable fellowship must now part and suffer many divissions. First, those that lived on their lots on ye other side of ye bay (called Duxberie) they could not long bring their wives and children to ye publick worship and church meetings here, but with such burthen, as, growing to some competente number, they sued to be dismissed and become a body of themselves; and so they were dismiste (about this time) thoug very unwillingly." This was about 1632.

John Alden's original grant was 169 acres, north of the Blue Fish river, and "his house was on a rise of land near Eagle Tree pond." The first settlers located either on the seashore or on the tide estuaries so as to have easy access to Plymouth by boat. For until they had obtained a minister of their own and had been given permission to withdraw from the Plymouth council, they

perforce, must return each winter to Plymouth. Duxbury was incorporated as a separate town in 1637.

John Alden's log cabin was the home in which most of his family was reared. There were eleven children, including the three born while they still resided in Plymouth. They were: John, Elizabeth, Joseph, Sarah, Jonathan, Ruth, Mary, David, Priscilla, Rebecca and Zachariah.

The eldest son (1.) John, removed to Boston in 1659. He was a mariner and became a naval commander of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He was one of the original members of the Old South Church of Boston. His ancient slate headstone is embedded in a side wall of the present church edifice. This stone, together with those of Ann Quincy and Joshua Scottow, was dedicated at a special service on Sunday evening, October 26, 1884. In the sermon delivered by Hamilton Andrews Hill, A.M., on that occasion, he quotes a statement of the arrest, examination and subsequent experiences of Capt. John Alden as written by the captain himself during the witchcraft delusion in 1692. His statement of this episode in its entirety is as follows:—

"John Alden, Sr., of Boston, in the County of Suffolk, mariner, on the twenty-eighth day of May, 1692, was sent for by the magistrates of Salem, in the County of Essex, upon the accusation of poor, distracted, or possessed creatures or witches; and being sent by Mr. Stoughton, arrived there on the 31 of May, and appeared at Salem village, before Mr. Gedney, Mr. Hathorne and Mr. Corwin.

"Those wenches being present who played their juggling tricks, falling down, crying out and staring in people's faces, the magistrate demand-

ed of them several times, who it was, of all the people in the room, that hurt them. One of these accusers pointed several times at one Captain Hill, there present, but spake nothing. The same accuser had a man standing at her back to hold her up. He stooped down to her ear; then she cried out, 'Alden, Alden afflicted her.' One of the magistrates asked her how she knew it was Alden. She said the man told her so.

"Then all were ordered to go down in the street, where a ring was made: and the same accuser cried out, 'There stands Alden, a bold fellow, with his hat on before the judges: he sells powder and shot to the Indians and French . . . .'" Then Alden was committed to the marshall's custody, and his sword taken from him; for they said he afflicted them with his sword. After some hours, Alden was sent for to the meeting-house in the village, before the magistrates, who required Alden to stand upon a chair, in the open view of all the people.

"The accusers cried out that Alden pinched them then, when he stood upon a chair in sight of all the people, a good way from them. One of the magistrates bid the marshall to hold open Alden's hands, that he might not pinch those creatures. Alden asked them why they should think that he should come to that village to afflict those persons that he never knew or saw before. Mr. Gedney bid Alden to confess, and give glory to God. Alden said he hoped he should give glory to God, and hoped he should never gratify the Devil: but appealed to all that ever knew him, if they ever suspected him to be such a person; and challenged anyone that could bring in any thing on their own knowledge, that might give suspicion of his being such a one. Mr. Gedney said

he had known Alden many years and had been to sea with him, and always looked upon him to be an honest man; but now he saw cause to alter his judgment. Alden answered, he was sorry for that, but he hoped God would clear up his innocency, that he would recall that judgment again; and added, that he hoped that he should, with Job, maintain his integrity till he died. They bid Alden look upon his accusers, which he did, and then they fell down. Alden asked Mr. Gedney what reason there could be given why Alden's looking upon him did not strike him down as well; but no reason was given that I heard. But the accusers were brought to Alden to touch them; and this touch, they said, made them well. Alden began to speak of the Providence of God in suffering these creatures to accuse innocent persons. Mr. Noyes asked Alden why he should offer to speak of the Providence of God; God by His Providence (said Mr. Noyes) governs the world, and keeps it in peace; and so went on with his discourse, and stopped Alden's mouth as to that. Alden told Mr. Gedney that he could assure him that there was a lying spirit in them; for I can assure you that there is not a word of truth in all these say of me. But Alden was again committed to the marshall, and his mittimus written.

"To Boston, Alden was carried by a constable; no bail would be taken for him; but he was delivered to the prison keeper, where he remained fifteen weeks; and then, observing the manner of trials, and evidence then taken, was at length prevailed with to make his escape.

Per JOHN ALDEN"

"The mittimus was signed by John Hathorn and Jonathan Corwin, and Alden was, as he says

PARLOR JOHN ALDEN HOUSE

taken in charge by a constable carried to Boston and lodged in jail where he remained for fifteen weeks. He made his escape about the middle of September, at the bloodyest crisis of the tragedy, and just before the execution of nine of the victims, including that of Giles Corey. He is understood to have fled to Duxbury where his relatives secreted him. He made his appearance among them late at night, and on their asking an explanation of his unexpected visit at that hour, replied that he was flying from the devil and that the devil was after him. After a while, when the delusion had abated, and people were coming to their senses, he delivered himself up, and was bound over to the Superior Court at Boston, the last Tuesday in April 1693, when, no one appearing to prosecute, he, with some hundred and fifty others, was discharged by proclamation and all judicial proceedings were brought to a close. It is to be feared that ever after, to his dying day, when the subject of his experience on the 31st of May 1692 was referred to, the old sailor indulged in rather strong expressions."

Elizabeth (2) married William Pabodie, a civic and military leader of Duxbury. They removed to Little Compton, Rhode Island, where she died in 1717 at the age of ninety-four. Elizabeth numbers among her descendants, the poet Longfellow, who immortalized his Pilgrim ancestors in his poem "The Courtship of Myles Standish."

Joseph (3) was a farmer and lived in what is now West Bridgewater on lands received from his father, comprising his share of lands purchased previously from the Indians by him and Myles Standish.

Sarah (4) first wife of Alexander, oldest son

of Capt. Myles Standish. They had seven children.

Jonathan (5) inherited the Duxbury estate from his father, of whose will he was administrator. He was a notary and a representative to the general court from Duxbury. His grave is in the Old Burying Ground in South Duxbury near the site of the first church. His tombstone was found to be the oldest of any in town during the Ter-centenary observance in 1937. It bears the date Feb. 17, 1697.

Ruth (6) married John Bass of Braintree. She was the ancestress of John Adams and John Quincy Adams, Presidents of the United States. She died October 12, 1674.

Mary (7) married, before 1667, Thomas Delano, son of Philip Delanoye, one of the original settlers of Duxbury.

David (8) "was a prominent member of the church, a man of great respectability and much employed in public business." He married Mercy, daughter of Constant Southworth.

Priscilla (9) married Samuel Cheesbrook in 1699. Little is known of Rebecca (10) except that she was of marriageable age in 1661. Zachariah (11) had a daughter Anna who married Josiah Snell on Dec. 2, 1699. They were the ancestors of the poet William Cullen Bryant.

During their middle life Pilgrim John and Priscilla went for a time to reside with their son Joseph. Later the town records of Bridgewater show that they returned to Duxbury to take up residence in their newly constructed home, which is the present house built in 1653. It is a commodious dwelling of ten rooms designed for the occupancy of the two Pilgrims and also of their son Jonathan, his wife and four children. John

Alden and Priscilla spent their later years in the house and in it both of them died. Subsequently it was passed down from generation to generation in the line of Jonathan who had inherited it from his father. The notable line of Aldens who have owned and occupied the house, together with the date of the death of each indicating the approximate accession to ownership, is as follows:

1. Pilgrim John Alden, died Sept. 12, 1687
2. Jonathan Alden, son of above, died 1697
3. Col. John Alden, son of above, died July 24, 1739.
4. Samuel Alden, son of above, died 1744
5. Col. Briggs Alden, brother of above, died Oct. 4, 1796.
6. Maj. Judah Alden, son of above, died Mar. 12, 1845.
7. John Alden, son of above, died Aug. 13, 1871.
8. John and Henry Alden, sons of above.
9. John and Henry Briggs Alden, sons of above.
10. John T. Alden.
11. Charles L. Alden.
12. Alden Kindred of America, Inc.

The first owner Pilgrim John was magistrate, deputy governor, member of the council of war and assistant to the governor during the last twenty-eight years of his life, a man figuring prominently in the affairs of the early colony. Captain Jonathan Alden was buried under arms 17, Feb. 1697. At the grave Rev. Ichabod Wiswell delivered an address, a copy of which has been preserved. Extracts are given in the Collections of American Epitaphs by Rev. Timothy Alden Jun. D.D. Vol. 3, Art. 622.

Concerning Col. John Alden we quote from the Alden Memorial p. 10, "He was affable in his manners, respected; and much employed in public business. Like his father, he had a taste for military pursuits; was early an officer in the militia and Colonel in 1732. Involuntary servitude in those days had not been abolished in Massachusetts and he owned one slave, by the name of Hampshire, probably 'a military necessity.' "

Samuel Alden, the fourth owner, was master of a merchant ship. He settled in England, died in 1744 and bequeathed the homestead which he had inherited to his brother Briggs.

Col. Briggs Alden "was early elected an officer in the militia; a Major in 1762, and Colonel in 1776. He was a magistrate, an active man in business affairs,—untiring in his efforts to sustain the Continental Congress and the liberties of his country." Alden Memorial p. 21. A portrait of Col. Briggs Alden hangs in the Duxbury Historical Society rooms. His son, Maj. Judah **Alden,** was an "officer in the Revolutionary war; highly respected as a soldier and citizen." His son John Alden was a trader and conducted a store at the junction of Alden and Tremont streets. He left the house jointly to his sons Henry and John. These each had sons. Henry Briggs Alden, son of Henry, and John Alden, son of John. Later, Henry Briggs Alden sold his part to his cousin John, who was the last in the line of Jonathan Alden to own the house. He sold it to John T. Alden of St. Louis, Missouri and it was purchased from him by Charles L. Alden, the last individual owner. He turned it over to the Alden Kindred of America, Inc., who now hold the title. The present officers of the Alden Kindred are as fol-

lows: President, Judge Ralph C. Estes, of Attleboro, Mass.; Secretary, Col. John B. Richards, of Fall River, Mass.; Treasurer, Charles L. Alden, of Duxbury, Mass. Reunions of the kindred are held each summer on the first Saturday in August, in a building erected for the purpose, only a few rods from the old homestead.

Charles L. Alden, formerly of Hyde Park, Massachusetts, now of Clearwater, Florida, and Duxbury, Mass., is the present conservator of the house. He is of the 8th generation in direct line from Pilgrim John through the second son Joseph. It is through his vision and foresight that the John Alden House is preserved, furnished with colonial pieces of family association or historic interest, and opened to the public. Both he and Mrs. Alden have given unstintingly of their time, their energy, and their means to make the atmosphere of the John Alden homestead exemplify the sturdiness and the simplicity of the Pilgrims. Visitors may perchance, find inspiration from the glimpse here afforded into the sturdy, toilsome, albeit bold and resourceful life of Pilgrim days; and here gain a firmer hold upon our heritage from them—integrity in government for the good of all, and undaunted faith in God.

The John Alden House is a 30′x40′, two and one-half story dwelling of impressive proportions, facing south as was the pioneer custom, and formerly fronting on the highway which followed the course of the Blue Fish river. It is now approached from the rear by a lane leading south from Alden street parallel to the railroad. An ell 14′x27′, part of the original building, was the woodshed of former days, open on the west side

LIVING ROOM JOHN ALDEN HOUSE

to shelter sheep at night. Without, on this same side, is still to be seen the remains of the old well with its sweep.

The framework and general plan of the house remain as when it was first built. The front entrance opens into a narrow hall with rooms opening on either side and a narrow stairway at the left leading to the upper floor. To the right is the living room, the Great room of earlier days. The windows are deeply recessed and the boarding around them, as well as much of the other wood-work in the house, shows the marks of the tools by which it was hand smoothed. Through the center of the ceiling, half exposed, runs a 12″x12″ beam, one of the main timbers in the frame. The walls were lathed and plastered, and paneling over the fireplace added between fifty and seventy-five years, it is believed, after the house was built. The paneled doors still have the butterfly and HL hinges applied with nails tools by which it was hand smoothed. Through the center of the ceiling, half exposed, runs a hardware. Some of the hinges have pins, the type used after 1700; some are of a cruder form. The H, the ornamented H, the butterfly and strap, the wedge and strap, even the rarer rat-tail; all are here. There are triangle latches and others of successive colonial periods.

Facing the entrance doorway of the living room is a wall cupboard, probably added when the room was plastered. The wavy, bubbly glass of its doors is showing the discoloration of age. Both this one and the corner cupboard by the fireplace are filled with Lowestoft. This early type of colonial china was made in Lowestoft, England, prior to 1760, and is all hand decorated in fine, dainty designs. Another cabinet in this

KITCHEN JOHN ALDEN HOUSE

room contains pieces of Alden heirloom china. Close by is the oldest and most valuable chair in the house, a Gov. Carver, much like the one in Pilrim Hall in Plymouth. The seat has been restored and rockers added at a much later period, as chairs with rockers were not known in the time of the Pilgrims. The hand wrought paneling of the wall over the fireplace is beautifully executed and the graceful arch of the fireplace itself has been noted by various authorities as being extremely rare in colonial New England.

The old Kitchen has been restored to its Pilgrim aspect. This was done at the suggestion and under the direction of Mr. Wallace Nutting. The hand made laths, the oyster shell plaster, the paper and the paint were all removed and there, concealed for over a century and a half, stood the original feather-edged pine walls as they must have been when Priscilla busied herself with some household task and blessed the room with her presence. On the gateleg table of Pilgrim origin, are wooden dishes that were in common use during the first fifty years of the colony. Pewter and porcelain were continually being brought from England to replace the wooden ware; some of which had been turned on a hand lathe, and some of which had been painstakingly fashioned by hand. Near the foot of the back stairway stands a double flax wheel, beside it a single one of the chair type. On the wall beside the fireplace hangs an ancient English cross-bow, which is, no doubt, the oldest piece in the house. On the opposite wall is an array of wooden utensils. There is an apple parer for use when apples were being dried for winter. The operator sat upon one end to hold it in place, the apple was speared through the core onto

three prongs attached to a spindle geared to a hand crank by wooden cogs. Later models of this piece of apparatus have been in use as recently as the days of our great grandmothers. There is a dough trough used on the weekly baking days. Bread was kneaded on the table top and set to rise in the trough beneath it. One very old piece is a wall cupboard sturdily mortised together; its paneled door has staple hinges. A shoulder yoke with iron fingers attached by straps, enabled one to fetch four buckets of water at one trip from the brook or spring. A wrong-doer of colonial days might be sentenced to wear for a specified time a pair of ankle shackles such as those hanging by the chimney. The fireplace is of original brick laid in clay with the oven at the back. It was reached by means of the long handled iron peels that were used to pull out the coals and arrange the food inside. The nearly square mouth of the oven was closed with a piece of wood, usually green oak, in place of a door during the baking. Near the opposite end of the fireplace hang Betty lamps, the earliest means of lighting used by the Pilgrims. These are shallow iron vessels, somewhat boat shaped, suspended by a six to ten inch stem, hooked at the top. They were filled with any available fat or grease and were used with a floating wick, a piece of tow or a bit of fabric and lighted at the nose. Before the hearth stands an old English roasting spit, a mechanical device whereby meat hung upon hooks attached to a revolving wheel is kept in motion for almost an hour by the winding of a spring. In the chimney corner is an inconspicuous, but nevertheless the most sacred relic in the house—an iron mortar and pestle

which is said to have been used in bygone days by John and Priscilla.

Opening from the west end of the kitchen is the tiny corner bedroom in which both Priscilla and John Alden died. The exact date of the death of the former is unknown; John Alden died Sept. 12, 1687, at the age of 88. In this room, empaneled in the original wall, is the widest board in the house measuring 27 inches across. The old cord bedstead in this room has posts reinforced with wooden pegs. The chest in the corner is grooved together—neither hand wrought nail nor wooden peg is used anywhere in it. Upon this chest is a quaint petticoat lamp and a very much out-styled razor. Above it is a courting mirror of ancient appearance, and its decoration, which is at the top only, is now half obliterated by age. It depicts an ardent swain on his knees before the lady of his choice offering her a mirror.

The other door from the John Alden bedroom leads into the parlor at the left of the front entrance. This room is more modern in appearance than any of the others. When dear old "Aunt Polly" lived in the house, near to a century ago, she did not consider hand hewn beams genteel enough for her parlor; so she had them boxed in, both in this room and in her bedroom upstairs. Elsewhere they appear as they did originally except for the added paint. Another innovation in "Aunt Polly's" time was the installation of an iron mantel frame in the original fireplace. This has been retained, though it dates back not more than ninety years, for the comfort of subsequent occupants of the house. On the west wall hang two large pictures, gifts of the late Mr. Vernon A. Field, former president of the Alden Kindred of America. The larger is of the monument in

Southampton, England, which commemorates the departure of the Mayflower. It was there that John Alden boarded the vessel prior to its sailing for America in 1620. When the monument was dedicated in 1913, Mr. Field was in attendance and presented the tablet, which is the subject of the smaller picture, emplaced near the base of the monument. Following is the inscription on the tablet:

To the Glory of God
in lasting memory of

John Alden

a citizen of Southampton
who joined the Pilgrims on this quay
1620

"Youngest of all was he, of the men
who came in the Mayflower"

Born in 1599, he married 1623 Priscilla Mullins,
the "Mayflower of Plymouth"
who, according to story, when he was
pleading suit for his friend, Myles Standish
archly said:—

"Why don't you speak for yourself, John?"

A founder, magistrate, and deputy governor of
THE PLYMOUTH COLONY
He died 1687, the last survivor
of the signers of the compact.
This tablet presented by his descendants
The Alden Kindred of America
1913

There is one correction to be made in this inscription. John Alden and Priscilla Mullins were married in 1622; not in 1623, as above stated. In this room also are several notable pieces of furniture. Here is the first spinet-piano which was brought into Plymouth county. It was used

in the First Church in Plymouth for years and was finally sold to make way for a more modern instrument. Once during its career it was bartered, a good horse being given in exchange. Beside it stands the grandfather clock which was given as an heirloom to Williams and Thankful Alden when they were married in 1803. It is a one-day clock with wooden works and is wound by the weights. It marks the hours with its clear bell strike and the steady beat of is pendulum gives no hint of tiring in spite of a century and a half of faithful service. The oldest and most interesting piece in the room is a harmonium. This instrument dates 1640-50 and was the forerunner of the meloe. This one originally belonged to Peregrine White, the first male child of English parentage born in America. He was born on the Mayflower while it was at anchor in Provincetown harbor. The instrument had bellows which are now useless and was originally pumped by the right elbow of the player, but later re-arranged so that it could be pumped by the foot. It had never been out of the White family until it was brought to grace the parlor of the John Alden House.

Climbing the narrow stairs about the two huge chimneys is a most interesting procedure. The stairs lead directly into a spacious sleeping room directly above the living room. To the left running across the face of the slanting chimney wall on a level with the third stair from the top, is a narrow walk way, guarded by a handrail, leading to the other large front bedroom. The chimney pile consists of two chimneys; one, nearly straight up from the cooking fireplace in the kitchen; the other of the lean-to type, accommodating the flues of the four heating fireplaces,

BEDROOM JOHN ALDEN HOUSE

but separate and distinct from the first, so that odors of cooking would not draw down into other parts of the house. These are the original chimneys now plastered over on the outside.

The great chamber is a charming room. Facing the entrance door is a six-legged highboy of pine with beautifully turned legs and the original delicate brass pulls, a superb piece dating back to 1695. The canopy bedstead has straight slender posts and a tester of hand woven linen and knotted lace fringe. The spread was made on a hand loom and has the date 1814 woven into it. In the corner by the chimney cupboard stands Darius Alden's old musket bearing the date 1789.

In the next room is an old trundle bed with wooden casters inserted in the posts to aid in pulling it from beneath the large bedstead where it was kept when not in use. The room beyond still has the first wall-paper that was pasted directly onto the wooden walls. The partition between these two rooms is made of but three wide pine boards and a doorway in which is hung one of the original pine doors. Next beyond is the spinning room, located conveniently at the foot of the attic stairs so that flax hung over the rafters would be handy. In this room are hung many family relics which include Maj. Briggs Alden's canteen and cartridge belt used in the Revolutionary War, also a pair of balances which belonged to him. The northwest corner room was "Aunt Polly's", a tiny one, with boxed in beams and corner post. In it, is the oldest bed in the house and it also contains one of the very earliest sewing machines and a collection of daintily hand made garments of long ago.

Throughout the second floor, evidence of the original construction of the house can be easily

traced. Most of the doors are the original ones made of two hand-smoothed boards cleated together with hand-wrought iron nails; some of them even have the original hardware. The hand-hewn gunstock corner posts and the sawn corner braces of the same wood are clearly shown. These latter together with the rafters in the old kitchen corroborate the mention in early writings "of sawn timber used in the construction of the Alden mansion". It was probably 'sawn' in the mill established within hauling distance in 1640. The primitive method of stair construction may be seen, the treads being set upon cleats applied with stout square nails. At opposite ends of the house are the windows with twenty-four panes.

The John Alden House, by its sturdy proportions and its secluded location, suggests a remoteness, not of years alone, from the intense bustle and drive of modern life. It seems the embodiment of those staunch characteristics of faith in God, loyalty to one another, unwavering devotion to principle, and unserving pursuance of objective which have been the very bulwark of our nation.

The Compact

SIGNED IN THE CABIN OF THE "MAYFLOWER"
NOV. 11TH, OLD STYLE,
NOV. 21ST, NEW STYLE, 1620.

"In the name of God, amen, we whose names are under written, the loyal subjects of our dread soveraigne Lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, Franc and Ireland king, defender of the faith, etc., having undertaken, for the Glorie of God, and advancemente of the Christian faith, and honor of our king and countrie, a voyage to plant the first colonie in the Northerne parts of Virginia, doe by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God, and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civill body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherence of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enacte, constitute and frame such just and equall laws, ordenances, acts, constitutions and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most meete and convenient for the general good of the colonie, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names at Cap-Codd the 11 of November, in the year of the raigne of our soveraigne lord, King James of England, Franc and Ireland, the eighteenth, and of Scotland the fifty-fourth, ANO DOM 1620."